State-of-the-art technology in courts

2823. DR V. MAITREYAN: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any steps to provide the state-of-the-art technology in all the High Courts in the country, for the purpose of documentation and speedy hearing of cases;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total amount allocated and disbursed to each State for the above said programme during the last three years, year-wise and State-wise; and

(d) the steps being taken to provide a secure and safe atmosphere in the courts of the country?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government. is implementing a Scheme for computerization of the judiciary in the country. The scheme *inter-alia* provides for upgradation of the existing Information and Communication Technology infrastructure of the High Courts and electronic networking of all the courts in the country.

(c) The scheme is being implemented through National Informatics Centre (NIC). Funds are being provided to NIC for the scheme and no financial assistance is being provided directly to the States. An amount of RS.187 crore has peen placed at the disposal of NIC for the purpose.

(d) Providing safe and secure environment in the courts is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments.

Extension of retirement age of High Court Judges

2824. PROF. P.J KURIEN: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposal for extension of retirement age of High Court Judges is under consideration of Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions and Law and Justice has recommended the extension of the retirement age of High Court Judges from 62 to 65 years; and

(d) the action Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. A proposal to increase the retirement age of the High Court Judges is, presently, under examination of the Government. The Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice in its 20th Report has recommended that the retirement age of Judges of High Courts be raised from 62 to 65 *i.e.*, at par with the retirement age of a Judge of Supreme Court.